



STUDIJŲ KOKYBĖS VERTINIMO CENTRAS

VILNIAUS KOLEGIJOS  
STUDIJŲ PROGRAMOS *ERGOTERAPIJA*  
(*valstybinis kodas - 653B30001*)  
VERTINIMO IŠVADOS

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EVALUATION REPORT  
OF *OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY* (*state code - 653B30001*)  
STUDY PROGRAMM  
at VILNIUS COLLEGE

**Experts' team:**

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Išvados parengtos anglų kalba  
Report language – English

## DUOMENYS APIE ĮVERTINTĄ PROGRAMĄ

Studijų programos pavadinimas	<i>Ergoterapija</i>
Valstybinis kodas	653B30001
Studijų sritis	Biomedicinos mokslai
Studijų kryptis	Reabilitacija
Studijų programos rūšis	Koleginės
Studijų pakopa	Pirmoji
Studijų forma (trukmė metais)	Nuolatinė (3 m.)
Studijų programos apimtis kreditais	180
Suteikiamas laipsnis ir (ar) profesinė kvalifikacija	Reabilitacijos profesinis bakalauras, ergoterapeutas
Studijų programos įregistravimo data	2003-05-29

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## INFORMATION ON EVALUATED STUDY PROGRAMME

Title of the study programme	<i>Occupational Therapy</i>
State code	653B30001
Study area	Biomedical Sciences
Study field	Rehabilitation
Type of the study programme	College studies
Study cycle	First
Study mode (length in years)	Full-time (3 years)
Volume of the study programme in credits	180
Degree and (or) professional qualifications awarded	Professional Bachelor of Rehabilitation, Occupational Therapist
Date of registration of the study programme	29 May, 2003

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The Centre for Quality Assessment in Higher Education

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## **I. INTRODUCTION**

### ***1.1. Background of the evaluation process***

The evaluation of on-going study programmes is based on the **Methodology for evaluation of Higher Education study programmes**, approved by Order No 1-01-162 of 20 December 2010 of the Director of the Centre for Quality Assessment in Higher Education (hereafter – SKVC).

The evaluation is intended to help higher education institutions to constantly improve their study programmes and to inform the public about the quality of studies.

The evaluation process consists of the main following stages: 1) *self-evaluation and self-evaluation report prepared by Higher Education Institution (hereafter – HEI); 2) visit of the review team at the higher education institution; 3) production of the evaluation report by the review team and its publication; 4) follow-up activities.*

On the basis of external evaluation report of the study programme SKVC takes a decision to accredit study programme either for 6 years or for 3 years. If the programme evaluation is negative such a programme is not accredited.

The programme is **accredited for 6 years** if all evaluation areas are evaluated as “very good” (4 points) or “good” (3 points).

The programme is **accredited for 3 years** if none of the areas was evaluated as “unsatisfactory” (1 point) and at least one evaluation area was evaluated as “satisfactory” (2 points).

The programme is **not accredited** if at least one of evaluation areas was evaluated as "unsatisfactory" (1 point).

### ***1.2. General***

The Application documentation submitted by the HEI follows the outline recommended by the SKVC. Along with the self-evaluation report and annexes, the following additional documents have been provided by the HEI before, during and/or after the site-visit:

No.	Name of the document
1.	Activity Reports of Vilnius College (2010-2014)

### ***1.3. Background of the HEI/Faculty/Study field/ Additional information***

Along with the self-evaluation report and annexes, the following additional documents have been provided by the HEI before, during and/or after the site-visit:

1. Law on Higher Education and Research of the Republic of Lithuania
2. Procedure of the External Evaluation and Accreditation of Study Programmes
3. General Requirements of the first degree and integrated study programmes

#### 4. Methodology for Evaluation of Higher Education Study Programmes

The evaluation process was organised:

1) Self-evaluation and self-evaluation report (hereafter – SER), prepared by Higher Education Institution (hereafter – HEI), which is the basis for the evaluation.

2) Visit of the review team at the higher education institution - Vilniaus kolegija/ University of Applied Sciences (hereinafter – Vilnius College/VK) Faculty of Health Care, which took place on 7<sup>th</sup> May 2015. The visit incorporated all required meetings with different groups, namely administration of the Faculty of Health Sciences, staff responsible for SER, teaching staff, students of all years of study, graduates and social partners. The expert team evaluated various support services namely, library, skills laboratories and computer facilities. Additionally, the expert team (hereinafter – ET) also reviewed the final theses of bachelor students. Based on the SER, meetings with stakeholders and visits to facilities, the expert team discussed findings and prepared general conclusions, which were presented in a final meeting with the self-evaluation team, members of administration of College, and other stakeholders. After the visit, the ET met again to discuss and agree the content of the report, which represents the ET consensual views.

3) Production of the evaluation report by the expert review team.

#### **1.4. The Review Team**

The review team was completed according *Description of experts' recruitment*, approved by order No. 1-01-151 of Acting Director of the Centre for Quality Assessment in Higher Education. The Review Visit to HEI was conducted by the team on 7/May/2015.

1. **Prof. Sandra Buttigieg (team leader)**, *Professor and Head of Department, Health Services Management, Faculty of Health Sciences, University of Malta, Malta.*
2. **Prof. Hector Tsang**, *Professor and Associate Head of Department of Rehabilitation Sciences, Hong Kong Polytechnic University, Hong Kong.*
3. **Ms. Karin Lilienberg**, *Lecturer, Head of Chair of Occupational Therapy, Tallinn Health Care College, Estonia.*
4. **Ms. Alma Cirtautas**, *lecturer of Faculty of Medicine, Vilnius university, Lithuania.*
5. **Ms. Monika Stančiauskaitė**, *student of Vytautas Magnus University study programme Biochemistry.*

## **II. PROGRAMME ANALYSIS**

### **2.1. Programme aims and learning outcomes**

The study programme Occupational Therapy was last approved on 17 August, 2009 by order of SQEC Director N.1-73. The learning outcomes of the study programme were formulated based on the Lithuanian Descript of Qualifications Framework, Lithuanian Description of Study Levels and recommendations of the Council of Occupational Therapists for the European Countries (COTEC), World Federation of Occupational Therapists (WFOT) and the European Network of Occupational Therapy in Higher Education (ENOTHE).

As listed on Table 2 of the SER (p.8), the aim is to prepare occupational therapists who are able to perform, independently or in cooperation with the rehabilitation specialist team, health care including restoration and maintenance of patients' abilities and compensation of impairments by purposeful activity seeking to help patients to live independently, taking into account their wishes, needs, and requirements. This is clear, comprehensive, and contains most distinctive features of a qualified OT programme such as purposeful activity, independent living, etc. The learning outcomes are divided into two categories of competencies including general and subject specific. General competencies have three aspects and subject competencies have five aspects. Each aspect has one to four well-defined intended learning outcomes in behavioral terms. It is good, that the information is published on the VK website which is accessible to all stakeholders of the study programme. It is however suggested that the notion of preparing occupational therapists as rehabilitation specialists using biopsychosocial model in their clinical reasoning and provision of treatment should be written down more explicitly in the programme aims and learning outcomes. Using biopsychosocial model as the educational framework is distinctive feature of OT education around the world.

The learning outcomes of the study programme is highly connected to the public needs and the needs of the labour market as the aims and learning outcomes are closely related to the Mission and strategic development of VK 2011-2020 strategic plan. The study programme has close collaborative relationship and regular meetings with social partners and employers. This has convinced ET that the study programme meets the needs of the labour market. Also, examples of these changes are reported on p.10 of the SER.

This is a three-year professional bachelor degree of occupational therapy with a view of training occupational therapists having an orientation of practice and clinical competencies. This is in line with the mission of VK to train practice-oriented professionals (SER, p.4). This focus is clearly communicated to students, teachers and social partners as ET could notice during the site visit. This has also been clearly articulated in the aims and learning outcomes especially in subject competencies. Four out of five of the competences are related to implementation of

occupational therapy according to clients' needs by the graduates. These include preparation and implementation of the occupational therapy programme, communication/collaboration, professional acting and professional growth, and occupational therapy development. ET can assure that programme aims and learning outcomes are consistent with type and level of the studies.

The name of the programme is occupational therapy is appropriate which aligns well with the learning outcomes. The learning outcomes set out all elements required by effective delivery of occupational therapy service. This is further echoed by the content of the programme and the qualification to be offered to the graduates.

## **2.2. Curriculum design**

The curriculum design follows legal requirements in Lithuania. The programme structure is clearly shown on Table 4 (SER, p. 12-14) with a total of 180 credits in general subjects, subjects of the study field, and optional subjects. The programme lasts for three years with six semesters. Each semester carries a total of 30 credits. General subjects such as philosophy and basics of law and management consist of 24 credits, subjects of the study field such as kinesiology and physical medicine and rehabilitation consist of 147 credits. Among these, 37 credits belong to practices with examples including cognitive practice and first practice of professional activity. Optional subjects consist of 9 credits. Most of these exceed the minimal requirements.

Table 3 (SER, p.9-10) reports how the subjects are related to the achievement of the learning outcomes in four major areas of knowledge and skills. In general the subjects are spread evenly across all of these outcomes. The foundation knowledge in biomedical science consists of genetics, anatomy, physiology and pathology. More applied subjects include kinesiology and physical medicine which are necessary foundation for the learning of occupational therapy applied to the treatment of physical dysfunctions. Subjects in the area of psychosocial and behavioural sciences which is essential for the application of the biopsychosocial and holistic approach in occupational therapy assessment and intervention however have room for consolidation. There are only two subjects namely philosophy and psychology in this area. Subjects such as behavioral analysis and sociology may be included. In special skills, the subjects are well covered for the application of occupational therapy in major areas including physical rehabilitation, mental health, geriatrics, and paediatrics. Comments from students and graduates supported the above observation. As a result, the ET recommends that the Curriculum could be updated and those subjects suggested could be included.

The content of the subjects and modules throughout the three years follow a logical pattern. General subjects and more elementary core subjects are taught basically in the first year and first semester of the second year. These subjects provide the basic foundation and theory for the students which are necessary for understanding and learning practical skills of occupational therapists in various fields including physical rehabilitation and mental health. The design of the curriculum is also consistent with a practice focus that the applied subjects have an orientation in practice and skills development which are needed by the labour market. Given the practice focus, the curriculum also consists of elementary information in research. Examples include IT and Statistics, Method of Applied Research, and Final Thesis. Comments from students and graduates supported the above.

Table 3 (SER, p.9-10) illustrates clearly how the different subjects support the achievement of different aspects of intended learning outcomes. For instance, the skills of understanding the clients from a holistic approach and preparing and implementing occupational therapy programme to meet the needs of clients are achieved by applied subjects in occupational therapy for the Elderly, occupational therapy in mental health, occupational therapy in Neurology, and Physical medicine and Rehabilitation. The content and methods of these subjects align well with the learning outcomes as shown in the subject description of Annex I of the SER.

This three-year programme with 180 credits is in general sufficient to ensure learning outcomes. This is supported by the students, graduates and social partners that the evaluation team met. The only missing link is the inclusion of adequate subjects in psychosocial and behavioural sciences which are the foundation of practice using a biopsychosocial or holistic approach.

The content of the programme reflects in general the latest achievements in science and technologies of the occupational therapy profession. First, the programme well prepares the graduates to work in major areas of occupational therapy including physical rehabilitation, mental health, paediatrics and geriatrics, it was also confirmed by the social partners and graduates. Second, the programme equips the students with basic statistics clinical reasoning, and research methodologies that are necessary for understanding current literature in occupational therapy. Third, the final thesis provides students with experience in discovering new information in occupational therapy. The quality of the final theses that the evaluation team reviewed confirmed the above view.

### **2.3. Teaching staff**

The OTSP is served by staff meeting legal requirements. There are altogether 28 teachers with 25 full-time and 3 part-time staff. The list and qualifications of these teachers are

clearly reported in Annex 2 of the SER. Eleven of them have master degree and three of them have doctoral degree. The expertise of the teaching staff covers a wide range of disciplines including philosophy, language, education, psychology, pathology, physical therapy, and nursing. However, **four** of them are qualified occupational therapists, with **two** specializing in orthopaedics and traumatology (O&T), one in paediatrics and one in mental health and elderly. Based on World Federation of Occupational Therapists (hereinafter – WFOT) standards, there should be more staff having a qualification in occupational therapy to ensure the learning of more specific assessment and treatment skills of occupational therapy in different clinical areas. In addition, it seems that the clinical experience of those staff members with an occupational therapy qualification might be a bit limited. They expressed difficulties in explaining the distinctive role and responsibilities of occupational therapists in the health care team, especially the differences with social workers and physical therapists. However, it is good to know that there is effective communication of staff. Nevertheless, teachers with other background such as nursing and physical therapy do not fully understand the specific role of occupational therapy in different clinical settings as it revealed during the site visit and discussions with ET. This may prevent them from teaching the most essential knowledge and skills needed by the students as the future occupational therapists. In addition, based on ET meeting with the teachers, their English standard has to be further improved so as to be able to teach competently the subjects in English. This will make sure the students are fluent in English which is necessary for international exchange before and after their graduation. Without such exchange, growth of the occupational therapy profession will be quite limited.

Based on the information ET was given, the teaching staff turnover is considered to be able to ensure an adequate provision of the programme especially in the various aspects of expertise that are needed for OT education.

The quantity of staff is strong in general. The critical mass of staff is able to ensure the teaching of general and foundation subjects such as anatomy, physiology, psychology, pathology. However, the number of staff members with occupational therapy qualification should be increased. These staff members with occupational therapy qualifications are essential for the teaching of occupational therapy applied subjects and ensuring learning outcomes pertinent to assessment and implementation of occupational therapy in various settings.

Based on the SER, teachers from 2010 to 2014 had actively involved in developmental activities to improve their professional qualifications via attendance of seminars, courses and training held by various local and foreign establishments. Many teachers had presentations in conferences, appearance in media, and participations in activities organized by professional associations. The professional development activities of each of the teachers are listed in Annex

3. Table 6 lists the outgoing exchange of teachers during this period. This shows the college has created conditions for the professional development of teachers necessary for the provision of the programme. Nevertheless, due likely to the limited existing network and English standards of the teachers, the exchange and developmental activities were basically restricted in Lithuania and neighbouring countries with similar culture, language and level of development in rehabilitation. ET suggests that exchange of teachers should go further into the international communities of occupational therapy in other places such as North America and the Asian-Pacific region. It is good to hear that teachers are satisfied with their workload including staff development activities. It would be even better to have a clear career progress and promotion criteria for teachers in the OT study programme that set out the relationship between promotion and staff development and service to the community.

The presentations and publications of teachers during this period are listed on p.16 of the self-study report. Teachers expressed during the meeting with the evaluation team that they were actively involved in research and scholarly activities. The areas of the research projects currently conducted by teachers with an occupational therapy background are highly relevant to universal trends including mental health, pediatric rehabilitation and traumatology. Similarly, teachers with non-occupational therapy background are also having their projects in rehabilitation what is commendable by ET. This included their supervision of the final theses of the students. The quality of some of the theses was very high. Yet there was no financial support for staff in recruiting research assistants and buying more hi-tech equipment. The quality of the research would be limited by lack of resources and infrastructure. Coupling with the limited English standards, the journals of the publications did not have an international appearance such as *American Journal of OT* and *British Journal of OT*. Similarly, ET recommendation is that it would be also good to have a set of clear promotion criteria for staff that lay down the requirement for research achievement.

#### **2.4. Facilities and learning resources**

The evaluation panel had a visit to relevant teaching and learning facilities including libraries, lecture halls, classrooms, and practice laboratories which are within the same building. The size and quality are up to international standards. The laboratories align well with the curriculum design and learning outcomes. It is good to see that there are laboratories in learning core occupational therapy skills in physical rehabilitation, ADL training, pediatric rehabilitation, etc. In addition, there are laboratories for learning supporting skills such as nursing care, massage therapy and IT. The library is also spacious with very good environment to facilitate learning and study of students. However, there do not have laboratories for the teaching and

learning of more specialized occupational therapy skills in some areas of practice such as splinting, pressure therapy, assistive technologies, vocational rehabilitation, etc. These laboratories have become standard teaching and learning facilities in well developed countries.

The laboratories mentioned above are equipped with necessary equipment, computers and stimulators to facilitate teaching and learning. In the nursing care laboratory, there are many stimulation equipments for learning of basic nursing procedures. In the IT laboratories, there are numerous computers for hands on practice to help achieve learning outcomes.

The laboratories mentioned above are available for students to practise their clinical skills on their own. In addition, the OT study programme has very close relationship with occupational therapists in hospitals that students may have practice in these setting either during their clinical placement or at their own time. Students' feedback regarding practices was positive.

The library has many printed and non-printed materials on occupational therapy including textbooks, therapy manuals, journals and electronic databases both in English and non English items which ET saw. Some prestigious journals in occupational therapy are still lacking such as *American Journal of OT*, *International Journal of Therapy and Rehabilitation*, *Psychiatric Rehabilitation Journal*, etc. So, this might be the recommendation for improvement.

## **2.5. Study process and students' performance assessment**

The publicity of the OT study programme is adequate which has provided good orientation to secondary school students who have an interest in occupational therapy. This is to ensure that those who applied and were eventually admitted into the programme have a genuine interest in the occupational therapy profession. The admission is based on the competitive scores of the students which is an effective mechanism for admitting students with high academic qualities. The competitive scores seem to on an upward trend from 2010 to 2013. As told by the administration, there was a revamp in the calculation of the competitive score in 2014 which explained why the score dropped dramatically from 17.02 in 2013 to 5.76 in 2014. More elaboration is needed in the change in the competitive score computation in order to avoid misunderstanding. The effectiveness of the admission requirements is convincing as what ET experienced in the discussion with the students. Based on ET meeting with the students, most of them are of high quality and have a keen motivation to be occupational therapists after graduation. However, there should be more explicitly analysis for the apparently high wastage of students at 37.8%.

The programme structure and the related organization of the study process is shown in Table 4 (SER, p.12 to 14). The general subjects and compulsory subjects are well organized throughout the three-year study period. The 180 credits are evenly spread in the six semesters

with 30 credits for each semester. Professional practice immediately follows theoretical studies. Final thesis will be the final assessment of the students. The above organization follows international approach and sounds logical in the curriculum design. The only comment ET received from the students is that they wanted to have earlier exposure to the occupational therapy profession. This may take place in the first semester instead of the second. Also, ET received comments that students wanted the professional practice to begin earlier than the current curriculum begins in the IV semester.

Although the programme is at a college level, the students are given ample opportunities to participate in research activities with an applied context. The participation of the students in these activities has been adequately described on p.22 of the SER which includes participation in various local and international conferences and public events. The students' final theses have also confirmed this conclusion. The evaluation team was thoroughly reviewing the final theses of the students during the visit and found that the topics of the theses align well with international interests and the quality of the projects is in general high. This is also consistent with the comments ET received from the students. The employers responded that the graduates have had good foundation in research and evidence-based practice.

According to the information ET received, the number of students admitted from 2010 to 2014 ranged from 36 to 39. Out of these students, only 1 to 4 of the students had the opportunities to have outgoing experiences which constituted 2.7 to 10.5% of the student population each other. This is considered as a low number and ET recommends to put efforts in increasing these numbers. Moreover, the countries that the students spent their time overseas are mainly neighbour countries with similar culture and language. This is not entirely satisfactory as these outgoing experiences should give exposure of students to different cultures and values. Based on ET observation, the barriers are mainly in language of the students and the limited network available to the OT study programme. Almost 40 students joined the meeting with the evaluation panel, only a few of them are contemplating this possibility of having outgoing mobility. One more worry pointed out by the students is that there does not exist a mechanism which ensures the transfer of credits to their study in this OT study programme during their international exchange.

The self-evaluation report contains detailed description of the academic and social support given to the students on p. 24-25 of the SER. Academic support includes consultations with teachers and practice supervisors/mentors. The students may also have discussion with the social partners on future career prospects. Social support that is available to students includes scholarships, allowances, prizes and accommodation. The above support has been confirmed via our meetings with the students, graduates and social partners.

The assessment of each of the subjects is clearly written in the subject description in Annex I. The assessment items of general subjects follow the pattern of tests and individual tasks making up 50% of the subject. Another 50 % goes to examination. For professional subjects, Individual tasks and demonstration skills constitute 50 to 60% while the remaining 40 to 50% goes to examination. The assessment criteria are clear and adequate. The assessment criteria are also available to the public. ET received consistent comments from the students.

There have been regular employers' surveys conducted by the OT study programme. The results found that the employers are satisfied with the graduates' knowledge and skills. This aligns well with the comments ET received from the employers. All of them opined that the graduates of this programme are of high quality especially in terms of their practice skills. They did not compare unfavourably to graduates from university OT programmes.

## **2.6. Programme management**

The programme committee of OT study programme is responsible for programme implementation and quality assurance. The committee consists of seven persons headed by physiotherapist with doctoral degree. Other members consist of five lecturers and one student representative. Each of the members has clearly delineated responsibilities. Although the current organizational structure is led by a leader who is trained as a physical therapist, the staff team with a wide spectrum of expertise across different disciplines are still enthusiastic and appreciative of each other. No professional rivalry between occupational therapists and other disciplines are observed. ET is told that this is because of the college regulations, the head of department has to be the chairman of the programme committee who is currently a physiotherapist by training. ET was also told that this regulation will soon be changed. It is planned that the new leader of the committee will be a trained occupational therapist that the evaluation team believes is to the advantage of the study programme in the long run. This will help occupational therapy to gradually develop as an independent profession with close relationship with other more established disciplines. It seems that this new arrangement is welcome by teachers especially those with an OT qualification.

Based on the SER and our meetings with the administration, ET has had an impression that the programme is regularly collecting feedback from a variety of stakeholders to make sure that relevant and useful comments are used constructively to guide further implementation of the programme with higher quality. To achieve this, regular surveys are conducted among stakeholders. The information is fed to the programme committed and made available at the faculty library. The open-mindedness of the administration is also confirmed by the experiences

of the students. ET is told that comments from the students may be easily given to teachers and the administration. Changes will be made not too long after the comments are expressed. Meanwhile, ET is told by the social partners that they have had regular meetings with the programme administration, with 3 to 4 times per year. Their comments will be collected at the meetings. If the comments are useful to further improvement of the programme, revisions to the programme implementation will be made.

This is the first time that evaluation involving international experts is conducted since the programme was last approved on 17 August, 2009. However, there has been continuous internal evaluation for the past years. This has been clearly documented on p.10 of the SER.

Main stakeholders consist of teachers, students, graduates and social partners. For teachers, there is an effective feedback system with the programme committee. This is to make sure that comments from the teachers about the study programme are heard. As to students, there are student surveys and roundtable discussion to make sure opinions of the students especially in the aspects of programme content, course of studies and assessment are known to the programme committee. Meanwhile, the OT study programme conducted regular surveys about the study programme and subject teaching to analyse students' attitudes, values, motivation and critical thinking among various stakeholders including graduates and social partners. The information was used for making improvement in the programme implementation. All of the above are confirmed by ET meetings with the stakeholders. The impression is that all stakeholders have close contacts with the programme management. The only recommendation is that the programme management should cooperate with social partners to negotiate for more support from government or at political level to create more occupational therapist posts and at the same time improve employment opportunities for graduates.

The seven-member programme committee is obliged to quality assurance of the study programme at the internal level. The internal quality assurance is based on the policies formulated by the Quality Management Division of VK. The internal quality assurance has clearly defined guidelines in four dimensions namely input, study process, results and subsequence. The details are clearly reported on p.28 to 31 of the SER. The procedures involve all stakeholders which have led to obvious increase in the popularity of the study programme and higher competitive scores of the applicants. These policies and procedures have been confirmed by ET meetings with the administration, teachers, and social partners. The evaluation team considered it effective and efficient.

## **2.7. Examples of excellence \***

### **III. RECOMMENDATIONS**

To further improve the current level of quality of the OT study programme, the programme needs to

1. have programme aims and learning outcomes geared more towards preparing occupational therapists using the biopsychosocial model
2. consolidate the knowledge using the Model of Human Occupation (MOHO) model which is the foundation of occupational therapy theory accepted at international level
3. have clearer staff development and promotion criteria for the teachers and provide clearer guidelines for career progression and promotion
4. recruit more lecturers with occupational therapy qualifications and more staff with PhD qualifications if possible
5. improve command of English which is necessary for effective teaching and international exchange
6. establish laboratories for teaching and learning of more specialized skills such as assistive technologies, splinting, pressure therapy, etc.
7. improve library resources on occupational therapy specific textbooks, journals and databases
8. prepare students to have an understanding of the occupational therapy profession earlier
9. allow students to have earlier involvement in professional practice
10. improve command of English which is necessary for learning English textbooks and other literature and international exchange
11. consider possible development of professional master degree
12. should cooperate with social partners to negotiate for more support from government or at political level to create more occupational therapist posts and at the same time improve employment opportunities for graduates
13. improve and nurture occupational therapy leadership so as to consolidate occupational therapy as an independent academic and professional entity in VK
14. should formulate strategies to enter the approved list of entry level educational programmes of WFOT

### **IV. SUMMARY**

This is a well structured and organized programme with good quality in most areas and

approaching very good in the study process and students' performance assessment. The programme aims and learning outcomes are well defined following the needs of the labour market. The ultimate target is clear that it aims at preparing the graduates to excel themselves in clinical practice. The weakness might be just that the wordings are not explicit enough to have a biopsychosocial approach.

The curriculum design aligns well with the programme aims and learning outcomes. The general subjects well prepare the students to learn more applied techniques for assessment and treatment of clients in major areas of occupational therapy including physical rehabilitation, mental health, pediatrics and geriatrics. A space for improvement might be the biomedical orientation in its current structure. The curriculum does not have adequate coverage of foundation knowledge in psychosocial and behavioral science such as "introduction to behavioral science" and "sociology".

The programme has a critical mass of enthusiastic and experienced staff from a wide spectrum of expertise across different disciplines. It is also good to see that there is no professional rivalry among teachers of different disciplines. All of them work towards the goal of implementing a study programme of high quality. Those with an occupational therapy background are working harmoniously and cooperatively with other professionals. Still ET thinks there is a lack in occupational therapy leadership in the teaching team. In addition, just few teachers have occupational therapy qualifications in the major areas.

The programme has adequate premises and space that allow effective teaching and learning. The laboratories are well defined for teaching and learning of core occupational therapy knowledge and skills including physical rehabilitation, simulated ADL areas, and pediatric rehabilitation. In addition, there are also laboratories for learning of supporting skills such as nursing care, massage therapy and IT. The library is also resourceful in terms of textbooks, treatment manual, journals and electronic databases. However, laboratories for more advanced skills such as splinting, pressure therapy, assistive technologies are lacking. Some internationally leading journals in OT and rehabilitation could arise in the library's shelves.

The major strength of this programme is that it is able to attract high quality students with high motivation to be occupational therapists. The students are fully aware of their strength in clinical practice, but do not feel that they are disadvantaged in research and theories compared with those in the university programme. They have in general satisfactory command of English. The students go through the programme smoothly with adequate preparation in theories and practical knowledge and skills. Graduate are commended and appreciated by the social partners in terms of their work attitude and skills. Many students are inspired for further study to upgrade their level of competencies. The only limitation is lack of opportunities for international

exchange is limited.

The programme management has a clear and well defined structure which is operationalized by the seven-member programme committee. The quality assurance procedures are also effectively and efficiently ensured by the programme committee. The programme has very regular feedback from all stakeholders for further improvement. The major strength is that the programme maintains a very close relationship with social partners. It is recommended to include leadership by teaching staff with an occupational therapy background, to make clarity on expectations on staff qualifications and experiences for career progression and promotions.

## V. GENERAL ASSESSMENT

The study programme OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY (state code – 653B30001) at VILNIUS COLLEGE is given **positive** evaluation.

*Study programme assessment in points by evaluation areas.*

No.	Evaluation Area	Evaluation of an area in points*
1.	Programme aims and learning outcomes	3
2.	Curriculum design	3
3.	Teaching staff	3
4.	Facilities and learning resources	3
5.	Study process and students' performance assessment	3
6.	Programme management	3
	<b>Total:</b>	<b>18</b>

\*1 (unsatisfactory) - there are essential shortcomings that must be eliminated;

2 (satisfactory) - meets the established minimum requirements, needs improvement;

3 (good) - the field develops systematically, has distinctive features;

4 (very good) - the field is exceptionally good.

Grupės vadovas: Team leader:	Prof. Sandra Buttigieg
Grupės nariai: Team members:	Prof. Hector Tsang
	Karin Lilienberg
	Alma Cirtautas
	Monika Stančiauskaitė